

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 AGRE-00 INT-05

OES-06 COME-00 EB-08 TRSE-00 /109 W

-----291223Z 023575 /20

R 290847Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5624

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 0319

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MZ, CU

SUBJECT: CASTRO VISIT

REF: (A) MAPUTO 286, (B) MAQUTO 298, (C) MAPUTO 300

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO ASSESS FULL IMPACT OF CASTRO VISIT, IT PROBABLY PORTENDS CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN MOZAMBIQUE AND CUBA, EXPANDED CUBAN ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MOZAMBIQUE AND GREATER VISIBILITY FOR HERETOFORE RARELY SEEN CUBAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL.
END SUMMARY

2. SINCE CASTRO'S DEPARTURE ON MARCH 23, MOZAMBIQUE MEDIA HAS TURNED ALL ITS ATTENTION TO FORTHCOMING VISIT OF SOVIET PRESIDENT NIKOLAY PODGORNYY. HOWEVER, FROM OUR LIMITED VANTAGE
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POINT, TWO AND HALF DAY VISIT OF CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO TO MOZAMBIQUE APPEARS TO HAVE GONE EXTREMELY WELL. ALTHOUGH LOCAL PRESS DID NOT ANNOUNCE CASTRO'S VISIT IN ADVANCE OR PLAY-UP CUBAN-MOZAMBICAN RELATIONS (AS IT IS NOW DOING WITH PODGORNYY VISIT AND SOVIET-MOZAMBICAN RELATIONS), IT PROVIDED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE OF CASTRO VISIT ONCE IT WAS UNDERWAY. ALL OF CASTRO'S PUBLIC REMARKS WERE PUBLISHED AND HIS PICTURE WAS A

DALY FRONT PAGE ITEM FOR FOUR DAYS.

3. ALL INDICATIONS SUGGEST THAT MACHEL AND CASTRO, WHO HAD NOT MET IN CLOSE CIRCUMSTANCES BEFORE, STRUCK-UP A WARM FRIENDSHIP AND GOT ALONG VERY WELL TOGETHER. ACCORDING TO PRESS, MACHEL ACCOMPANIED CASTRO ON HIS SHORT EXCURSION OUT OF BEIRA AND SPENT A NUMBER OF HOURS CONVERSING WITH THE CUBAN LEADER IN THE PRESENCE OF ONLH A FEW AIDES. NEGOTIATIONS WHICH LED TO THE SIGNING OF COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE (REF B AND C) WAS CARRIED OUT LARGELY BY TWO DELEGATIONS HEADED BY FOREIGN MINISTER CHISSANO AND CUBAN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS SECRETARY OSMANI CIENFUEGOS.

4. ALTHOUGH IT IS TOO SOON TO ASSESS FULL IMPACT OF CASTRO SOJOURN, IT PROBABLY PORTENDS CLOSE DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL TIES BETWEEN MOZAMBIQUE AND CUBA, BOTH OF WHICH SHARE FERVENT ANTI-IMPERIALIST AND ANTI-WESTERN IDEOLOGIES AND AFFINITIES. WHILE SOME INCREASED MILITARY COOPERATION MAY BE IN THE WORKS, EXPANDED CUBAN TECHNICAL COOPERATION, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREAS OF FISHING AND SUGAR PRODUCTION, IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO RESULT FROM VISIT. IN ADDITION, CUBAN TECHNICIANS AND ADVISORS HERE, WHO WE ESTIMATE AT ROUGHLY 200, AND WHO ARE RARELY SEEN IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF COUNTRY, CAN PROBABLY BE EXPECTED TO BE MORE VISIBLE FEATURE OF MOZAMBIQUE LANDSCAPE. IN ADDITION, WE SPECULATE THAT CUBAN ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF EQUIPMENT AND TRAINERS TO THE MOZAMBIKAN-BASED ZIMBABWE GUERRILLAS OF ZIPA WILL ENJOY A MODEST AUGMENTATION.

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